

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

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R 151041Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8983

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CINCLANT

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C*O N F I D ? E N T I A L LISBON 0176

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MAAR PO

SUBJ: TRANSFER OF LAJES FIELD HO * RESPONSIB*LITIES

REFS: (A) LISBON 0147 111527Z JAN 74

(B) CINCLANT 121546Z JAN 74

1. WE RECOGNIZE THAT STATEMENT PROPOSED REF A DOES NOT TELL THE WHOLE STORY, IN THAT IT FAILS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT U.S. EXPERIENCE IN ISRAELI RESUPPLY OPERATION WAS THE STIMULUS TO RESCIND DECISION, TAKEN LAST YEAR, THAT USN BE HOST AT LAJES. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT FOR USG IN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO LINK RESUPPLY OPERATION WITH DECISION THAT USAF SHOULD REMAIN AS HOST WOULD CLEARLY WORK AGAINST OUR INTERESTS IN CURRENT AZORES NEGOTIATIONS.

2. CINCLANT STATEMENT PROPOSED REF B HAS ADVANTAGE OF BEING BRIEF AND LOW KEY. HOWEVER, THAT STATEMENT FAILS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT DECISION TO GO NAVY WAS INDEED MADE LAST YEAR, AND SO ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY. WE DOUBT SAYING ONLY THAT "CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO A TRANSFER OF U.S. HOST RESPONSIBILITY FROM USAF TO USN" WILL HOLD UP.

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3. WE BELIEVE THAT TO SERVE OUR NEGOTIATING INTERESTS SOME MENTION OF NAVY'S ROLE AT LAJES SHOULD BE MADE, AND TO ENHANCE CREDIBILITY SOME JUSTIFICATION FOR RESCINDING EARLIER DECISION SHOULD BE GIVEN. IN THIS LIGHT, WE SUGGEST FOLLOWING MARRIAGE OF TEXTS:
QUOTE AS ANNOUNCED PREVIOUSLY, A JOINT USAF AND USN SURVEY TEAM VISITED LAJES, AZORES IN SEPTEMBER 1973 TO EVALUATE THE NEED FROM THE US POINT OF VIEW OF EXISTING FACILITIES, FUNCTIONS AND PERSONNEL THERE. FOLLOWING THIS REVIEW, AND GIVEN THE IMPORTANT ROLE AT LAJES OF THE US NAVY'S ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE OPERATIONS, A DECISION WAS MADE TO TRANSFER US HOST SERVICE RESPONSIBILITY FROM USAF TO USN. HOWEVER, SERIOUS ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL DIFFICULTIES HAVE BEEN ENCOUNTERED IN CHANGING TO NAVY ADMINISTRATION, AND AFTER RE-EXAMINATION OF THE ISSUE THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HAS DECIDED TO CONTINUE USAF HOST SERVICE RESPONSIBILITY AT LAJES. UNQUOTE.
SCOTT

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NNN

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